

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1996

0 900504

✓ SPEECH

OF

MR. G. F. ✓ MARTER, M.P.P.

(FORMER LEADER OF CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION)

DELIVERED IN ONTARIO LEGISLATURE
ON THE

Montreal River Pulp Agreement

MARCH 15TH, 1902.

MR. MARTER SUPPORTS THE GOVERNMENT,
AND
CONDEMNNS THE UNPROGRESSIVE ATTITUDE
OF HIS LEADER, MR. WHITNEY,
AND HIS SUPPORTERS

1902

Ontario Government's ✂ ✂ Pulpwood Policy

ENDORSED BY MR. MARTER

IN the Ontario Legislature on Saturday, March 15th, Hon. E. J. Davis, Commissioner of Crown Lands, moved the ratification of the agreement with the Montreal River Pulp and Paper Company. During the ensuing debate Mr. G. F. Marter, M.P.P., Conservative member for North Toronto, and former leader of the Conservative Opposition, in a strong and well-reasoned speech emphatically endorsed the course of the Government in regard to the above and other pulp agreements, and took decided grounds against the unprogressive attitude of his leader, Mr. Whitney, and his followers, upon the question of economic utilization of our pulpwood resources. After remarks by Hon. Mr. Davis, Mr. Whitney, Hon. Mr. Latchford and Mr. Carscallen, member for East Hamilton, who insinuated that some member of the Opposition had revealed the secrets of the Opposition caucus, and incidentally its divided councils upon a progressive policy of development, Mr. Marter said:

"I will endeavor to show to-day that I was in this Legislature when the first pulp concession was granted, and to show that my attitude from that time to the present has been thoroughly consistent. But before doing that I just want to ask one question, which, if any gentleman on this side of the House can answer, I hope he will answer it now. Who was the party suspected of giving away the counsels of our caucus? Now, if there is a gentleman on this side of the House can answer that I want him to do so."

A painful silence ensued as Mr. Marter stood facing his colleagues. Finally Mr. Whitney rose.

"My honorable friend probably expects a reply from me," said he, "I do not know whether he does or not. It is of no consequence whether he does or not. I have not heard anyone in the House to-day say anyone was suspected."

MR. MARTER—"Someone did say it, and I am prepared to fight it out now and here. I may say I was a party to that caucus, and if I am not revealing any party secrets I am quite prepared to state what took place on that occasion."

Again turning to his fellow-Conservatives Mr. Marter continued: "If honorable gentlemen on this side of the House think I ought not to do so, say so now."

Mr. Marter paused again to allow any of his colleagues to answer who felt so disposed.

Messrs. Matheson, Whitney and Carscallen spoke at the same time.

"I personally have no objections," said Mr. Matheson, "to the honorable gentleman doing as he thinks best, but—"

"Oh, leave it to his own sense of honor," added Mr. Carscallen.

"Yes, leave it to his own sense of honor," replied Mr. Matheson, while the Opposition leader contented himself with stating that—

"Decorum is decorum."

"Very well, then," said Mr. Marter, "I shall choose my own course. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is a well understood fact to the members of this House that at the time the Spanish River pulp concession was up I was doing my utmost—and so I spoke on the floor of the House—to have that concession granted. Now, then, when any person says the Government got information from our caucus and acted as it did, I say it is false as false can be, as far as I am personally concerned. What was I trying to accomplish? To get this side of the House to consent to that agreement. Would I not have been the most foolish man in the world, after having arrived at what was the basis of settlement, then to go and reveal it to the Government? Common sense ought to be used in these things, and common sense would say that if I did anything of that kind, and it got out, it would upset all that I was trying to do, and anyone could see I would have been most unwise in so doing. Why, a week before this the *Toronto Globe* had an editorial saying the Government were going to increase these dues. And now, if there is a man in the House thinks I revealed the secrets of caucus, let him stand up and say so to-day."

Mr. WHITNEY—"In order that there should be no misunderstanding, I propose to deal with any difficulty concerning me when it comes before me. If my hon. friend on my left (Mr. Marter) accuses any other hon. friend on my left of having said this—"

Mr. MARTER—"I have said simply this: We were all of one mind with the exception of myself, and I say they dare not make the statement that I revealed the secrets of the caucus; but they insinuate it."

Mr. WARDELL—"But you got in 'on the ground floor', didn't you?"

Mr. MARTER (turning to Mr. WARDELL)—"You are always interrupting. I have frequently had to ask you not to make unnecessary interruptions, and I hope you will have the goodness to keep quiet just now, especially when your opinion is of so little value." (Laughter).

Mr. WHITNEY—"He (Mr. Marter) does not say that anyone makes the statement."

Mr. MARTER—"They dare not."

At this juncture Mr. Matheson pulled Mr. Marter's coat-tails and whispered in the latter's ear as he leaned over.

Mr. Marter straightened himself up, a smile on his face, and said: "I have just learned from my hon. friend on my left that I am not suspected of doing this. I am glad to learn that."

The members on the Government side of the House laughed as Mr. Matheson rose to his feet, very red in the face, to protest against Mr. Marter making public use of private information. "I never suspected my hon. friend," he said: "I told him privately just now, and he immediately speaks out publicly."

The House laughed more heartily still, and Mr. Conmee asked Mr. Matheson to be kind enough to tell them just who he did suspect. And with this the rather painful scene ended.

MR. MARTER PLEASSED WITH MR. FOY'S CANDOUR.

"I was very much pleased with the candour and astonishment of my hon. friend from South Toronto when the Commissioner of Crown Lands was explaining the different points contained in this agreement. Why, they presented themselves to the hon. gentleman as being so fair and so good that he asked if these clauses were the same in previous agreements. Why was the question asked? I think I am safe in saying, as the Commissioner read clause by clause in this agreement, the hon. gentleman from South Toronto thought they were fair, and asked if they were the same as were contained in previous agreements. If not, what did he mean by asking that question? We have heard something about that *New York Post* article. What bearing has it, I would like to ask, upon this question? The only bearing it has is in showing the wisdom of the Legislature in saying that pulpwood shall not be exported. I do not see that that article has any other bearing upon this matter. Now, in connection with what I have to say, I wish in the first place to state that I have given considerable thought to this business. It is not a matter of a day; it is not a matter of a week. It has been a matter of seven long years since the first concession was brought before this Legislature. Living, as I had been previously to that, in Muskoka, and representing that constituency, where we had so much pine, and knowing the value of it to the early settler in furnishing work and labor, I certainly know that wherever these pulp concessions are given and industries established it will have a like effect, by giving employment to men and furnishing a market for farmers' produce.

"Now, sir, we all know, too, that the pine timber is decreasing in this country, and it is a most fortunate thing that we have pulp timber to take its place, in order to furnish work for the many settlers who are in our new districts. I was going to say that *this is not a party question, it is a business proposition, which should be, if it is right, endorsed by all in this Legislature, irrespective of party.* Viewing it as I do, then in that way I simply say, that in treating it I do so from a business standpoint for the benefit of our country.

MR. MARTER'S CONSISTENT COURSE.

"The first concession, in 1895, was acquiesced in by both sides of the House, and was by far the most favorable to the concessionaires of any succeeding ones. I at that time gave voice to the following expression, which I take from the *Mail* of April 5th, 1895:

"Mr. Marter approved of the agreement as being along the lines of the Conservative policy. He congratulated the government as having seen light."

"What light did I refer to? That which I held to be the policy of the Conservatives in endeavoring to do the best we could to build up home industry and furnish work and labor for the men of our own Province. I looked upon it at that time as being the correct thing to do, and congratulated honorable gentlemen on the Government side of the House on having come to see things as we saw them and as the Conservatives saw them, who had been doing their best for our own people by developing the natural resources of our country, thus giving work for all who wished it. That concession went into the hands of Mr. F. H. Clergue and those associated with him, and a most fortunate thing it was, Sir, for this country that this House at that time did not take the position that some of the members on this side are taking to-day. We would not have had Mr. Clergue in Ontario. We would not have had the benefit of that vast expenditure of capital which he has made and which was alluded to by the Honorable Commissioner of Crown Lands as some ten or twelve millions of dollars. That would not cover it, Sir. And then I say, as a representative of one of the largest constituencies in Toronto, I am backed up by the business men of this city on the position I take on this question, and I am prepared to defend my act with any person upon any occasion, either in this constituency or elsewhere. I feel so certain of my ground that I dare not keep silent. I feel so certain that what the Government is doing is in the interests of the business men of this city and the Province generally, that I know they will be a unit in saying, 'Yes, give every concession that you can as long as they are guarded by the fair terms contained in this agreement.'

THE MORE THE BETTER FOR ALL CONCERNED.

"Look at the Sault to-day. See how that place has grown. The giving of that concession furnishes work for thousands of men. The town population has more than doubled and house building, as we all know who visit that section of the country, is going on at a very rapid rate. Now, Sir, what caused it? The giving of that concession. And I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the more of these concessions we give the better I think it is for all concerned. We have had several concessions from that time until the present, and not until the Spanish River Concession was a word raised by any honorable gentleman in this House against this policy. The Opposition sat there from time to time when these concessions were passing through, when all of a sudden it woke up to the proposition that

something was not right and became suspicious. Shortly after the Spanish River Pulp and Paper Company got their concession they offered to the public stock in their company upon the same terms as the original concessionaires received theirs. Notwithstanding the fact that honorable gentlemen had been saying these concessions were very valuable, and that parties had been selling out their rights at fabulous prices, yet when given an opportunity to purchase stock on such favorable conditions they had not the courage of their convictions and did not invest a single dollar. (Applause.)

TIMBER VALUELESS UNLESS UTILIZED.

"What has this Government tried to do? Take the present agreement for instance. It calls for an expenditure of at least \$500,000 in buildings, machinery and plant, and that the same shall be operated for ten months in the year by not less than 250 hands on an average, and must have a daily output of 150 tons. Not only that, Sir, but, in addition to the above it exacts a deposit of \$20,000 in order to show the bona fides of the persons with whom they are dealing, and, unless the agreement is entered upon, this sum is forfeited. It is also stipulated that Canadian cement must be used and Canadian machinery, so far as the same can be obtained. It has also tried to prevent the trafficking in concessions granted, and has inserted in this agreement a clause preventing the concessionaries from selling their rights until they have erected buildings and started the industry. And so, I say, Sir, that *this agreement is the most favorable one ever brought before this Legislature.* (Applause). Now, Sir, that being the case, why should I not support it? We have the timber. Millions of dollars worth of it has been burnt in the past, and if we had had these pulp mills it would have been used and the country would have had the benefit of it. As I have said, we have the timber, but it is of no practical value to the province unless utilized. There are only two parties to do it—the one, the Government; and the other, the public. It would not be well for the Government to enter into the manufacture of pulp. Then what? The public. That is what is being done, as I have said before, and the timber is of no value to the Province unless worked up. *This cannot be done any too soon.* Had it been utilized in the past, great quantities of timber, instead of being destroyed by fire, would have been made use of and money from that source would have been put in circulation and employment furnished for large numbers of men. (Applause).

PRIVATE vs. GOVERNMENT ENTERPRIZE.

"Now, it has been said that it should not be done in this way. I think it is the wisest way. The Province is not liable in any sense for it. The Government's position is, and the Opposition's position was, until two years ago, what? Any parties who sought out what they thought was good territory for this purpose could come to the Government and make the agreement. Now, if they do not get

good territory who is to blame? Not the Government, not this Legislature, but the parties themselves who made the selection.

What is the position we would have been in in this Lloyds' matter. We have all heard of the difficulty between the Sturgeon Falls Pulp Company and the Lloyds, of London, England. Had the Government, in that case, surveyed the limits and put them up to public competition, the Lloyds could have justly said, in case it had turned out that there was not sufficient timber thereon, that the Government was to blame for offering the concession, not having sufficient timber to warrant persons in purchasing. As it was, the Sturgeon Falls people took the agreement just as others had done previously, namely, made their own selection and then came to the Government asking that the territory be leased to them. Therefore if any mistake was made in the calculation of the amount of timber it rested with the Sturgeon Falls people alone, and this Government or Legislature were in no wise to blame for the subsequent trouble which took place. So, Sir, I think it is wise for the Government not to explore or survey it, and say we have a large block with sufficient timber on and invite people to come and take it up. The other course, and the one adopted, is that the concessionaires look it up for themselves, and if they make a mistake they have only themselves to blame. (Applause). And, now, what do they get? A great deal is said about giving them so much. *I am glad to say they do not get the land.* That is clear enough anyway. *Then they do not get the timber unless they pay for it.* They have no right to use any of that timber unless they erect a mill, and are going to use it in that mill. And they agree to pay just such amount of dues as the Government may, from time to time, demand. Is not that in the interests of the country, Mr. Speaker? (Applause). Would any man, if he was a private individual, owning timber, hold it and say, 'No, I will not give it to you,' or 'I will not allow you to develop it?' I say, Sir, that the course pursued is the only practical, sensible one that could be pursued in a matter of this description. (Applause).

OPPOSITION OBJECTIONS DEALT WITH.

"No man investing a large sum of money such as has to be invested in these enterprises will embark in it unless he is assured of a large territory at his back of timber suitable for making pulp? Otherwise he would lose on his investment. The territory has to be large because we know that spruce timber only grows in clumps here and there. In hundreds of miles, perhaps, not a spruce tree. And therefore that is the reason why the concession must be large. And I say to-day that any set of men wanting to go into this business would be foolish to do so without having at their back sufficient timber to last twenty one years. The Opposition make two objections only to the Government's mode of granting concessions. First, they say they should be put up at public competition, which is impracticable, on account of the immense expenses attending the delimitation and estimation.

"Secondly, they claim that the dues should be regulated by the Legislature instead of the Government. If the present dues are not sufficient is it not the duty of hon. gentlemen on this side to say by resolution what, in their judgment, they think they ought to be, and which they have not yet done. That is a *better way than finding fault* with people who are *trying to do the country's business*. Any man or set of men can pull down and destroy, but it takes wise men to build up. *I have got sick and tired of listening to the innuendoes that everybody is a thief, and a robber, and so on.* I have lived to my age, and I am pretty well advanced, and I think it has yet to be said that I am a robber or a thief, or support men who are robbers or thieves. (Applause.) I am tired and sick of it, I say, Sir. And I only ask for the privilege and opportunity of meeting hon. gentlemen who make such assertions, when I will endeavor to convince any audience in this country that *this is a good business proposition and one free from any wrong-doing.* (Applause.)

GOVERNMENT DOING RIGHT.

"What does the settler get? The party who takes the concession takes it with the understanding that settlement cannot be impeded. That we all understand. The territory involved is open for settlement, and any settler who goes there and remains on that land six months and builds a house 16 x 30 and clears two acres of land, becomes the owner of all the timber on his lot. (Applause.) Now, Sir, if there was no mill there the settler would not want to go. The poor settlers of our backwoods know the value of taking out pulpwood, and it is a fine position that settlers going on these limits become the owners of every stick of timber on them except the pine, and upon which he pays no dues whatever. Who is taking anything from the settler, then? These agreements do not, *and I say again, that I give my hearty concurrence to this agreement,* as I did to those that preceded it. I have said, *and I say again, the Government is doing right,* and that previous agreements which met with the endorsement of this side of the House were not nearly as favorable to the Province as the present one. (Applause.)

"Before concluding, I would just like to recapitulate. In the first place, no rights are granted until mill is erected. Timber must be manufactured in said mill, and the dues payable are as much as the Government chooses to exact, which I hold, Sir, is the key of the situation, and that the concessionaires are practically at the mercy of the Government.

"Why should I efface myself? I am only doing to-day what I have consistently done for the past seven years, or since the inception of the pulp industry. I feel perfectly certain of my ground, and I believe that the *business men of the Province of Ontario will back me up* in the position I am taking. That it is not only in the interests of the manufacturers and merchants and the general public of the Province, but especially in the interests of the workingmen and those who wish to go to our new country in search of homes (Prolonged Government applause.)

